

Supporting Statement for Information Collection Requirements
1018-0102
National Wildlife Refuge System Special Use Permit
for all Refuges Outside Alaska

A. Justification

1. Legal Justification

The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee), as amended, sought to consolidate all the different refuge areas into a single "Refuge System." It also authorizes us to permit public accommodations on lands of the National Wildlife Refuge System, including commercial visitor services when we find the activity to be compatible and appropriate with the purposes for which the refuge was established. The Refuge Recreation Act of 1962 (16 U.S.C. 460k-460k-4) allows use of refuges for public recreation when it is not inconsistent or interfering with the primary purpose(s) of the refuge. These two laws govern the administration and uses of national wildlife refuges.

We have made slight revisions to the Special Use Permit application form (USFWS Form 3-1383), and we explain the changes as follows:

The permittee name and address are in the upper right hand corner instead of below the "blue goose" insignia. The application date and period of use is now below the insignia.

To aid in determining the type of activity requested, we have provided boxes to be checked in the "Purpose" section, or if the applicant's use is not covered, there is a section under "Other" for the applicant to explain the purpose.

We have moved the applicant signature and date directly under the "Description" box.

We have combined the "Amount of Fee" and "Record of Payments" boxes into one box, "Record of Payments," which now falls below "Special Conditions."

The signature and title of the issuing Service official and date approved appears alone at the bottom of the document

We have added step-by-step "Instructions for Completing Application" at the bottom of "General Conditions and Requirements."

2. Use of Information Obtained

We will provide refuge permit applications as requested by interested applicants. We will use the required written forms and/or verbal application information as requested to ensure that the applicant is eligible and/or the most qualified applicant to receive the refuge special use permit. We make provision in our general refuge regulations for public entry for specialized

purposes, including economic activities such as the operation of guiding and other visitor services on refuges by concessionaire or cooperators under appropriate contractors or legal agreements or special use permits (50 CFR 25.41 and §§ 25.61, 30.11, 31.13, and 31.16). These regulations provide the authorities and procedures for allowing permits on refuges outside of Alaska. Many permittees provide services and facilities to the public. We issue permits for a specific period as determined by the type, and location of the use or visitor service provided. We use this permit to ensure that the applicant is aware of the requirements of the permit and to ensure that the applicant is aware of his/her legal right. The likely respondents to this collection of information will be individual citizens, certain corporations who wish to be considered to conduct special uses on a refuge, nonprofit organizations, Federal, State, local, or Tribal governments.

3. Electronic Data Collection

We do not plan to use electronic or automated information collection or transmittal techniques in conducting the proposed information collection. The nature of the requested information provides very little opportunity to automate at the source level. This information is unique to each applicant and permit application.

4. Duplication

There is no duplication. No data on users of special use permits at national wildlife refuges are currently available. We use applicable portions of original applications in the case of renewals. We need the information requested on refuge permit application forms to review the specific use or activity proposed to evaluate the impacts on refuge resources and other users and to determine if it is compatible and appropriate with refuge purposes and the mission of the Refuge System. The information is specific to the applicant and the use or activity proposed and consequently, there is no duplication.

5. Impact on Small Business

This collection of information does not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities. Individuals submit the information that we collect for specific needs, and this information is not available from any other source. Small businesses from which we collect information are typically recreational visitor service operations (outfitters/guides), farming operations, commercial filming, and other commercial activities. As in the case of individual applicants, State, local, or tribal governments, or other for-profit and not-for-profit institutions, we limit the information requested to the minimum necessary to establish eligibility, resource protection, and to demonstrate that the applicants are aware of critical information that they need to know to protect themselves from future legal and financial predicaments.

6. Consequences of Not Collecting Data

Without information requested in the refuge permit application, our personnel would be unable to review the proposed uses and evaluate the impacts or effects of proposed uses of refuge lands. This would preclude our ability to fulfill statutory requirements and our responsibilities under the Administration Act, the Recreation Act, and other relevant laws and regulations to determine if the proposed activity or use meets refuge compatibility standards to evaluate the impact on uses of the refuge.

Special uses, such as haying and grazing, are beneficial management tools that we use to provide the best habitat possible on some refuges. We could not accomplish these management objectives without the cooperation and involvement of private individuals. Special Use Permits provide us with a legal and binding document authorizing the use.

Permits are the most effective method of allowing this type of activity to occur on refuges in a fair and equitable fashion. There is no set frequency of collection; the information is submitted by individuals in applications for Special Use Permits on an as-needed basis, and information collection only occurs at the time of application. We issue permits for a specified period of time, and they may be renewed which is a much shorter and simpler process.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection in terms of unnecessary burden on the respondents. Participation is voluntary. There are no circumstances which would require the collection to be inconsistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR §1320.5.

8. Federal Register Notice

A 60-day notice of intent to request clearance of information collection was published in the Federal Register on April 26, 2001 (66 FR 21006); and as of June 25, 2001, we have received no comments.

9. Payment of Gifts

Respondents will not receive any gratuity for completing the questionnaire.

10. Confidentiality

We require no confidential information and state that we are requesting this information in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974.

11. Questions of Sensitive Nature

We solicit no information of a sensitive nature.

12. Burden Hours

Most respondents should have access to required documentation and have personal knowledge of the requested information, however, respondents may need to conduct research to provide the requested information. Recordkeeping will be important so that we may perform audit procedures. We estimate that it takes an average of one hour to complete the application requirements to supply the needed information. We estimate that on the 522 refuges located outside of Alaska, we will authorized 10,440 permits each year.

Frequency of Collection	Several each day
Description of respondents	Individuals or households; State, local, or Tribal governments; businesses or other for profit organizations; not-for-profit institutions.
Types of permitted activities	Agriculture, Commercial Activities, Commercial Filming, Commercial Visitor Services, Special Events, Easements, Rights-of-Way, and Other miscellaneous activities.
Number of respondents	10,440
Estimated completion time	1 hour
Burden estimate in hours	10,440
Hours requested on SF 83	10,440
Hours in current OMB inventory	0
Difference (adjustment)	+10,440

13. Estimate of Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents

There are no additional annual out-of-pocket costs to respondents.

14. Estimate of Annualized cost to the Federal government

There are 522 national wildlife refuges outside of Alaska. On the average, each refuge will issue 20 special use permits annually with a single average permit cost to the government of \$45.00 to process (equipment, overhead, printing, postage, audit costs, and support staff) for a total of \$469,800. On many refuges, the permit application is simply handed to the respondent,

or mailed; on other refuges, staff may discuss specific permit conditions with the respondent before the respondent fills out the form. Once completed and returned to the refuge, the refuge manager approves or disapproves the permit application. If approved, we will impose and/or clarify conditions, the issuing officer will sign the document, and return a copy to the respondent.

15. Explanation of Program Changes or Adjustments in Items 13 or 14 of OMB Form 83-I.

We have revised the estimated respondents, completion time, annual time, and cost burdens associated with the reporting and recordkeeping from previous (1998) estimates to reflect an increase in the number of refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System which, in turn, increases the number of respondents, annual time, and cost burdens; and we provide more time for completion of the permit application.

16. Publication of collections

We do not plan to publish this information.

17. Display the OMB approval number and expiration date

We will display the OMB approval number and expiration date on the application.

18. Exception to the certification statement for "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions".

We have no exceptions to this statement.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods:

We do not use statistical methods.